

Mystical Significance of Hair - Part 2

Trimming facial hair has profound implications in the higher worlds

From the teachings of Rabbi Yitzchak Luria; translated and edited by Moshe Yaakov Wisniefsky



Trimming facial hair has profound implications in the higher worlds

The following is a careful translation from the Ari; it is, however, a difficult selection. For an introduction to the topic and extended commentary by our translator, please see [part one](#) of this presentation.

Do not cut off the hair on the sides of your head. Do not shave off the edges of your beard. (Lev. 19:27)

When performing a commandment, a person should do so to fulfill the will of his Creator, Who commanded him. For example, when a man's hair is cut, he should bring to mind that he will not allow the hair of the sides of his head to be shaved, nor the hair of his beard.

The mystical explanation is the following: There are the three types of hair of the head - those associated with *Arich Anpin*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva*. However, the hairs of *Arich Anpin* are of a quality of complete mercy and are all channels of lights that allow the lights to descend below; it is not appropriate to cut them. Therefore, the nazirite whose hair signifies *Atik* [associated with *Arich Anpin*] does not cut his hair at all, as has been explained regarding the commandment of the nazirite. However, in *Zeir Anpin* it is fitting to cut of the hair of one's head, particularly someone whose soul is rooted in the root soul of Cain.

The beard hairs are channels of divine spiritual abundance...

It is proper for a man to intend, when getting his hair cut, that he is a reflection of *Zeir Anpin*, and that he is removing all the judgments from himself by means of the *razor* [in Hebrew, "*ta'ar*"], which has the numerical value of the divine name *Ado-nai*. This numerical equivalency is achieved when each letter of this divine name *Ado-nai* is spelled out in full, and the total numerical value of each letter is added up. *Ado-nai* transforms the judgment; therefore, it has the numerical value of "*razor*" ["*ta'ar*"] to

remove the judgments...

"*Ta'ar*" is spelled: *tav* (400), *ayin* (70), *reish* (200), with a total numerical value of 670 plus 1 for the entirety of the word, equaling 671.

"*Ado-nai*" spelled-out is : **alef** (1), *lamed* (30), *pei* (80), **dalet** (4), *lamed* (30), *tav* (400), **nun** (50), *vav* (6), *nun* (50), **yud** (10) *vav* (6), *dalet* (4), with a total numerical value of 671

However, you already know that the head [of a person] incorporates allusions to the ten sefirot, and that its allusion to *malchut* constitutes the secret of the Sides of the Head. Thus, "side" [in Hebrew, "*pe'ah*"] has the numerical value of the divine name *Elokim*, and "*pe'ah*" is always in *malchut*.

"*Pe'ah*" is spelled *pei* (80), *alef* (1), *hei* (5), with a numerical value of 86.

"*Elokim*" is spelled *alef* (1), *lamed* (30), *hei* (5), *yud* (10), *mem* (40), also with a numerical value of 86.

However, there is no sustained existence to the world except through the judgments, and it is not fitting to remove them completely. To that end, we need to retain only the dimension of *malchut* [i.e. *pe'ah*], but this applies only to the head of *Zeir Anpin* [man]. However, *Nukva* [woman] does not shave her head. The reason is that since she corresponds to *Nukva*, and since all the judgments are in *Asiya* [related to *Nukva*], were she to remove the judgments from the head of *Nukva*, there would not remain any judgments in the world. Accordingly, a woman needs to keep her hair and does not shave her head.

My master was extremely careful not to get a haircut after midday, that is after the time arrives for praying the Large *Mincha*. Even on the eve of the Shabbat [i.e. Friday afternoon], he was cautious.

It is fitting that a man not uproot any hair from his beard at all, for the beard hairs are channels of divine spiritual abundance. He should intend that the top of the beard is the *First Tikun*.

The divine name "*E-I*", in the secret of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, and the hair of the beard on the left and right is twice the numeric value of the Hebrew word for "beard" ["*zakan*"], which is also the numerical value of the divine name "*Sha-dai*".

"*Zakan*" is spelled *zayin* (7), *kuf* (100), *nun* (50), and when doubled has a numerical value of 314.

"*Sha-dai*" is spelled *shin* (300), *dalet* (4), *yud* (10), also with a total numerical value of 314.

Together the beard as a whole is "*E-I Sha-dai*". For this reason a man should be mindful at all times not to grasp his beard so that he does not uproot any hair from it.

[Adapted by Zechariah Goldman from *Taamei Hamitzvot*, Kedoshim]

**FROM THE TEACHINGS OF RABBI YITZCHAK LURIA; TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY
MOSHE YAAKOV WISNEFSKY**

Zechariah Goldman is the founder of Devekut.com and is the author of 15 works on Torah spirituality. He lives with his wife and children in Los Angeles, California. He can be contacted at: alephbet@attbi.com

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria [...Ashkenazi ben Shlomo] (5294-5332 = 1534-1572 c.e.); Yahrtzeit (anniversary of death): 5th of Av. Buried in the Old Cemetery of Tzfat. Commonly known as the *Ari*, an acronym standing for *Eloki* Rabbi Yitzchak, the G-dly Rabbi Isaac. No other master or sage ever had this extra letter *Aleph*, standing for *Eloki* [G-dly], prefaced to his name. This was a sign of what his contemporaries thought of him. Later generations, fearful that this appellation might be misunderstood, said that this *Aleph* stood for Ashkenazi, indicating that his family had originated in Germany, as indeed it had. But the original meaning is the correct one, and to this day among Kabbalists, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria is only referred to as Rabbenu HaAri, HaAri HaKadosh [the holy Ari] or Arizal [the Ari of blessed memory].

© Copyright, all rights reserved. If you enjoyed this article, we encourage you to distribute it further, provided that you comply with Chabad.org's [copyright policy](#).

Chabad.org is a division of the [Chabad-Lubavitch Media Center](#) ·
In everlasting memory of our founder, [Rabbi Yosef Y. Kazen](#)
© 1993-2015 [Chabad-Lubavitch Media Center](#)